

Written Testimony
Kellyann Day

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Good Afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and other members of the appropriations committee. My name is Kellyann Day and I'm the executive director of New Haven Home Recovery. We are an agency that provides emergency shelter, supportive housing, affordable housing, food, clothing, furniture, clinical services and children's services to over 900 individuals a year. I'm here tonight to ask you three things: 1) to hold the housing and homeless line item in the DSS budget; 2) support the CT Coalition to End Homelessness' Rapid Re-Housing and prevention plan; 3) to fund the Next Steps program. I'll address each one individually.

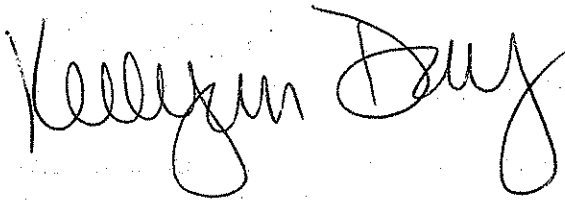
#1 I'm asking you not to cut any funding in the housing and homelessness line item because the shelters cannot provide safe shelter much less services without adequate funding. Level funding of these programs over the years has increased the burden on the programs to privately fund raise. Many programs have managed to cover gaps in funding through private donations while other programs have decreased services. Those that have succeeded in covering costs through private dollars, will find it more difficult to do so in 2009. Foundations and corporations who have donated in the past are unable to fund programs at 2008 levels. In some cases they are unable to fund programs at all. The same is true for the religious organizations that rely on donations from their congregations. They too have seen a decrease in the amount given. I have been with NHHR since 1995 and we have served thousands of women and children in emergency shelter. In the past year, we have seen an increase in the needs of our residents at a time when the funding has decreased. We received a cut of \$30,000 from the City of New Haven this year and as a result the number of case management hours available has decreased sharply, at a time when the needs have increased sharply. Further cuts to our program and other shelters, will result in further decreases in services and the possibility that shelters will not be able to provide shelter at all.

#2 The CT Coalition to End Homelessness is working with DSS on a plan to move families out of shelter faster and into stable housing using existing Beyond Shelter services, in a program called Rapid Re-Housing. CT Faces a significant and growing challenge of family homelessness, with a steadily increasing number of homeless families with children. We saw a 13% increase in homeless families from 2007 vs. 2008. It is estimated that over 40% of homeless people in CT are kids. The most common cause of family homelessness is poverty. By using the existing Beyond Shelter programs across the state to provide uniformed assessment and triage of families as families enter the system; this program can work to decrease the number of nights families have to stay in shelter. The beauty of this program is that the state is already funding an essential component, the Beyond Shelter Program. This program, which is revenue neutral, has

been proven to work with families who are in need of short term support. CCEH has more information on the program if you are interested.

#3 The Next Steps programs are critical and should be funded, both for this year and for the coming years. Without an on-going system of developing new housing both affordable and supportive, the over 317 homeless people served by NHHR last year and the 1109 requests for housing that we were unable to serve last year will be doubled and tripled in the coming years. It take many years to develop housing and without new projects in the pipeline, those of us who provide shelter will find ourselves providing long term housing in shelters because there will no place for people to move to.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kellyn Day". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.